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FESTIVAL 2025

16-18 May



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Wednesday 14 May

Blue Room Poets – anthology launch

Morisset Library, bawarramalang | 10.30-11.30am

Come along for the launch of *Blue Room Poets: an Anthology of Contemporary Australian Poetry*. Celebrate the success of the 4th Tuesday Poetry Club's new publication as the poets recite a selection of poems from the anthology.

GOLD COIN

Friday 16 May



Relax and write cruise

Workshop: Magdalena Ball

Booragul Wharf | 10am-noon

Climb aboard our literary cruise for a writing workshop on beautiful Lake Macquarie. Bring a notebook and pen and get set to combine a writing workshop with a relaxing cruise.

\$60 | LAKE MAC ARTS MEMBER: \$54

Ticket includes: Writing exercises led by Magdalena Ball and Devonshire tea



Everything you need to know about publishing

Seminar: Benny Agius

Windale Hub, bilyabayi | 10am-noon

Learn about the people who make decisions regarding your book, the importance of sales, marketing and publicity, and the role of social media. Benny Agius will also speak about the financial side of publishing, and how not to get taken for a ride.

\$25 | LAKE MAC ARTS MEMBER: \$22.50

Books are available for purchase and signing



Stories for the stage – playwriting

Workshop: Augusta Supple

Windale Hub, bilyabayi | 1-3pm

Step into the world of theatre writing with this dynamic, hands-on workshop led by acclaimed theatre director and creative producer Augusta Supple. Whether a first-time playwright or a seasoned storyteller, this workshop will spark your creativity and refine your craft.

\$40 | LAKE MAC ARTS MEMBER \$36



Crips & Creeps – Are you pulling my leg?

Performance

Warners Bay Theatre, baramayiba | 7.30–9pm

This raucous accessible comedy event boasts a line-up of award-winning performers with entertaining and uncensored insights into disability. Showcasing some of Australia's funniest comedians with disability or chronic illness.

\$40 | LAKE MAC ARTS MEMBER \$36

Saturday 17 May

EVENTS
WINDALE HUB,
bilyabayi



Lake Macquarie Fellowship of Australian Writers – anthology launch

Panel: Alison Ferguson, John Franks, Ned Stephenson, Sandra Boyd

10–11am

We are writers: twenty-five years one fellowship is the most recent anthology from the LMFAW. Celebrating a quarter of a century as a committed group of writers, current members have compiled history and narratives to capture the group's events and essence.

GOLD COIN

Saturday 17 May

EVENTS WINDALE HUB, bilyabai



Beyond representation: disability, storytelling, voice and visibility

Panel: Presented by Hunter Writers' Centre and Write Up! Writers with Disability

11am-noon

What does it mean to tell your own story? How does writing shape identity, challenge assumptions, and create change? Three writers with disability share their work and discuss the power of storytelling as a tool for visibility, self-expression and advocacy.

GOLD COIN



Mental health – writing from experience

Panel: Graeme Simson, Anne Buist, Craig Semple

Noon-1pm

Our panellists will reflect on their own experiences, personally and professionally to explore the topic of mental health. Australian psychiatrist Anne Buist and bestselling international author Graeme Simson welcomes us into the world of mental health with compassion and insight. Craig Semple has written about his own mental health struggles in his latest title *Getting Back Up Again*.

GOLD COIN



Skin – Deborah Kelly

Book Launch

12.30-1.30pm

Join Deborah Kelly to celebrate the launch of her latest title *Skin*. A fiction work for teens, *Skin* weaves a tale that explores identity, beauty and self-discovery. Join Deborah and her daughter Sakura, an inspiration for the book, for a reading and sharing of stories. Enjoy some fun snapping selfies with props and a photo booth.

GOLD COIN

Books are available for purchase and signing

Saturday 17 May

EVENTS WINDALE HUB, bilyabayi



Writing relationships

Panel: Janette Paul, Saman Shad, Natalie Murray

1-2pm

Learn how authors write authentic characters and relationships. Writing characters who feel real, well-rounded and interesting can be a challenge. New books by Janette Paul and Saman Shad offer unique perspectives on friendship, intimacy and personal fulfilment.

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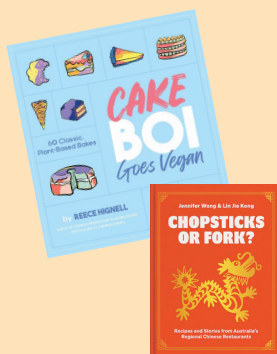
Poetry and performance

Panel: Rob Waters, Magdalena Ball, Sara Crane

2-3pm

Showcasing three acclaimed poets Rob Waters, Magdalena Ball and Sara Crane, discover the art of writing and how poetry can evolve into an engaging performance.

GOLD COIN



Food passions

Panel: Reece Hignell, Jennifer Wong, Kam Chen

3.15-4.15pm

Jennifer Wong's book *Chopsticks or Fork?* celebrates Australia's unique culture of regional Chinese restaurants. Reece Hignell breathes new life into nostalgic bakes with his vegan baking secrets in *Cake Boi Goes Vegan*. The panel will be joined by special guest Kam Chen, who ran Rathmines Chinese Restaurant for 30 years.

\$10 Ticket includes an afternoon treat provided by Cake Boi

Saturday 17 May

WORKSHOPS WINDALE HUB, bilyabai



Mapping workshop

Workshop: illustrator **Chrissy McYoung**

9–10.30am

Map your suburb, school, park or favourite place. In this workshop you will learn drawing techniques, using perspective, symbols and motifs, and identifying points of interest.

Ages 12 – adult

\$18 | LAKE MAC ARTS MEMBER: \$16.20



How to write funny

Workshop: **Jennifer Wong**

11am–12.30pm

Join writer and comedian Jennifer Wong (*Chopsticks or Fork? The Cook Up, Celebrities Letters and Numbers*) for an interactive workshop that will make your writing sparkle with humour. By learning how to use your comedy toolbox, you'll be able to make people laugh whether you're writing a speech, a short story, or a personal essay.

\$40 | LAKE MAC ARTS MEMBER: \$36



Microfiction writing for teens

Workshop: **Luke Evans**

11am–12.30pm

Join writer and teacher Luke Evans as you learn the art of creative writing through microfiction (writing super short stories). During the workshop you will learn writing techniques that will help you tell your story in a flash!

GOLD COIN

Books are available for purchase and signing

Saturday 17 May

WORKSHOPS WINDALE HUB, bilyabai



Hear! Hear! Podcasting workshop

Workshop: Michael Adams

1-3pm

How do you create audio narratives that command attention, capture the imagination and challenge audience expectations? Join Michael Adams, journalist, novelist, non-fiction author, and TV producer and presenter as he explains how podcasting became his main game after he created the Forgotten Australia podcast.

\$40 | LAKE MAC ARTS MEMBER: \$36



Crafting the novel

Seminar: Graeme Simsion

3.30-5pm

Graeme Simsion will cover the end-to-end process of writing, from premise to proofreading, as described in his book *The Novel Project*.

\$30 | LAKE MAC ARTS MEMBER: \$27



Multi-Arts Pavilion, mima

Haiku Digital

Exhibition of young poets

2-4pm

Young poets have their work displayed in our immersive 360-degree projection cube. Come along and enjoy light refreshments for this fun exhibition viewing, meet with friends and enjoy the park.

GOLD COIN

Sunday 18 May



Belmont Cemetery walk

Tour: Jo Henwood

Belmont Cemetery | 2.30-3.30pm and 4-5pm

130 years of stories will come to life in dramatic reenactments with professional storyteller Jo Henwood. Share in the stories of Belmont's fascinating history, its development and evolution, and its significant links to our heritage. The walk includes a guided tour and character enactments.

\$20 | LAKE MAC ARTS MEMBER: \$18



Tom Keneally

in conversation with Scott Bevan

Warners Bay Theatre, baramayiba | 1.30-2.30pm

In a half-century of storytelling so far, Tom Keneally has averaged a book a year, and in this dedication to craft has become an icon of Australian literature. Join Tom and Scott Bevan to discuss Tom's writing life.

\$25 | LAKE MAC ARTS MEMBER: \$22.50



Crime writing

Panel: Michael Robotham, Darcy Tindale, Jaye Ford

Warners Bay Theatre, baramayiba | 3-4pm

Join Michael Robotham, Darcy Tindale and Jaye Ford as they discuss everything crime writing. From crime writing trends to compelling stories, and crafting tension and high-stakes plots.

\$12 | LAKE MAC ARTS MEMBER: \$10.80